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A Neo-Pagan Filmography

An Annotated List Of Recommended Viewing

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Although this list is a long one, it could easily have been much longer. In fact, the hard part was deciding which of many good movies had to be left out, due to limitations of space. So I used a few rules to guide me. First, I gave preference to movies that had a strong Pagan message, as opposed to films that are 'merely' entertaining. Thus, a film like 'Never Cry Wolf', though it has no supernatural elements, made the list; whereas superbly crafted atmospheric entertainments like 'Gothic' and 'Eyes of Fire' didn't. Second, in dealing with the supernatural, I concentrated on films that informed, or at least stayed within the realms of possibility. Hence, I include 'The Haunting', but not 'Poltergeist'. Inevitably, I will have left out some of your favorites, for which I apologize in advance. But I had to stop somewhere.

APPRENTICE TO MURDER, 1988, C-94m
D: R.L. Thomas. Donald Sutherland, Chad Lowe, Mia Sara, Knut Husebo, Rutanya Alsa.
Intriguing fact-based story of a man who was a 'hex-meister' in the Pennsylvania Dutch tradition. His practice of folk medicine lands him in trouble with the law, and a final confrontation with a rival sorcerer leads to a charge of murder. Sutherland is appealing in the lead role, and the story unfolds mainly through his eyes. Mia Sara does a nice job in a supporting role. There's a lot of authentic folk magic to lend atmosphere.

THE BELIEVERS, 1987, C-114m
D: John Schlesinger. Martin Sheen, Helen Shaver, Harley Cross, Robert Loggia, Elizabeth Wilson, Lee Richardson, Harris Yulin, Richard Masur, Carla Pinza, Jimmy Smits.
After the death of his wife, Sheen and his son move to New York City, where they become involved in a grisly series of cultish human sacrifices. Although the religion of Santeria is unfortunately shown in a negative light, there is enough authenticity to lend lots of interest. A gripping thriller.

BELL, BOOK, AND CANDLE, 1958, C-103m
D: Richard Quine. James Stewart, Kim Novak, Jack Lemmon, Ernie Kovaks, Hermione Gingold.
Yes, I'm well aware that this movie, based on the John Van Druten play, is responsible for more misinformation about Witchcraft than anything outside the 'Bewitched' TV series. Still, I hardly know a Pagan who doesn't love it. For many of us, it was the first time we'd encountered the idea of Witchcraft alive and well in a modern metropolis. And Kim Novak is STILL my idea of what a Witch OUGHT to look like. And none of us will ever forget Kovak's reading of the line 'Witches, boy! Witches!' Or Stewart's offhand comment that it feels more like Halloween than Christmas. Lots of fun.

BROTHER SUN, SISTER MOON, 1973-Italian-British, C-121m
D: Franco Zeffirelli. Graham Faulkner, Judi Bowker, Leigh Lawson, Alec Guinness, Valentina Cortese, Kenneth Cranham
For most Pagans, St. Francis of Assisi is usually considered an honorary Pagan, at the very least. His insistence on finding divinity in nature is exactly what Paganism is all about. This film biography portrays his extreme love of and sensitivity to nature with poignant beauty. And the musical score by Donovan is such a perfect choice that, having heard it, nothing else would ever do. This is also a visually stunning film, as those who remember Zefferelli's 'Romeo and Juliet' might expect. If ever Christianity could be made palatable to the sensibilities of Neo-Pagans, it would have to be through the eyes of a nature mystic like Francis. The Catholic Church came close to naming him a heretic but, at the last minute, the Pope (played by Alec Guinness) sanctioned him. (Old Obi Wan comes through again!)

BURN, WITCH, BURN!, 1962-British, 90m
D: Sidney Hayers. Janey Blair, Peter Wyngarde, Margaret Johnston, Anthony Nicholls.
Based on the Fritz Leiber classic 'Conjure Wife' and scripted by Richard Matheson, this is an interesting view of Witchcraft. Granted, this has as many misconceptions as 'Bell, Book, and Candle', yet the premise is intriguing: that ALL women are secretly Witches, and ALL men don't know about it. This is mainly about one woman's use of magic to advance the career of her schoolteacher husband.

DARBY O'GILL AND THE LITTLE PEOPLE, 1959, C-93m
D: Robert Stevenson. Albert Sharpe, Janet Munro, Sean Connery, Jimmy O'Dea, Kieron Moore, Estelle Winwood.
Simply the best fantasy ever filmed. No kidding. This is a PERFECT little movie, and (along with 'The Quiet Man') the ultimate St. Patrick's Day film. Sharpe is sensational as Darby O'Gill, who likes to sit in the pub telling stories about his adventures with the King of the Leprechauns. Unbeknownst to everyone, they are TRUE stories! Every tidbit of Irish folklore, from banshees to the crock of gold to the costa bower (the death coach) is worked into the plot. The music and songs are great. So is the cast, many of whom were brought over from the Abbey Theater in Dublin! Sean Connery makes his screen debut, in a SINGING role! The subsequent untimely death of Janet Munro robbed the screen of one of its brightest actresses. (Her character's combination of willfulness and femininity is a textbook study. Compared to her, Princess Leia's character is not 'strong-willed' -- it's just snotty!) The special effects are miraculous for 1959! When Darby walks into King Brian's throne room, we walks THROUGH a crowd of Leprechauns, and I defy anyone to find a matte line! In fact, the special effects are so good throughout, that you FORGET that they're special effects, and end up deciding that they must have rounded up some real Leprechauns from somewhere.

THE DARK CRYSTAL, 1983-British, C-94m
D: Jim Henson and Frank Oz. Performed by Jim Henson, Kathryn Mullen, Frank Oz, Dave Goelz, Brian Muehl, Jean Pierre Amiel, Kiran Shaw.
The creators of the Muppets come up with an entire fantasy world, where even the flora and fauna are original. And this world is in grave peril unless the missing shard of the Dark Crystal can be found and restored to it. This is a hero-quest in the classic mold, with art stylings by Brian Froud. Although wonderfully imaginative and entertaining, it has a very strong message of mysticism, all about universal balance and the synthesis of opposites. (One wonders if the entire quartz crystal fad of the late 1980's had its origins here!)

DON'T LOOK NOW, 1973-British, C-110m
D: Nicolas Roeg. Julie Christie, Donald Sutherland, Hilary Mason, Clelia Matania, Massimo Serato.
Based on a so-so occult thriller by Daphne du Maurier, this becomes a brilliant film in the hands of Italian director Nicolas Roeg (famed for 'The Man Who Fell to Earth). Shortly after their daughter has drowned, Sutherland (who restores mosaics in old churches) and his wife go to Venice where they meet two sisters who are spiritualists. They begin to receive messages from the daughter, who keeps warning Sutherland to leave Venice because he is in mortal danger. If ever a film captured the real feeling of how psychic ability operates, this is it. The use of subjective editing, and the symbolic use (and total control of!) color throughout the film is masterful. (This film also contains one of the most stylish love scenes ever filmed.) Squeamish people need to be warned about the violent ending, however.

THE DUNWICH HORROR, 1970, C-90m
D: Daniel Haller. Sandra Dee, Dean Stockwell, Ed Begley, Sam Jaffe, Lloyd Bochner, Joanna Moore, Talia Coppolia (Shire).
Nice adaptation of an H. P. Lovecraft story, with a wonderful cast. Dean Stockwell is the quintessential ritual magician, both mysterious and compelling. He steals the original 'Necronomicon' from a library in order to 'bring back the Old Ones', a race of powerful but dark beings that inhabited the earth before humans. Sam Jaffe is wonderful as his crazed grandfather. (What happened to the father is part of the mystery!) And Sandra Dee is perfect as the innocent virgin chosen to be the unwilling host mother for the rebirth of these demons. (Some versions of the film cut the last scene short, which shows a developing fetus superimposed over Dee's abdomen. 'Nuff said.) By the way, no film has ever shown the raw power of otherworldly beings as well as this. No 'latex lovelies' here. Just pure, unadulterated elemental force. Nice job!

THE EMERALD FOREST, 1985, C-113m
D: John Boorman. Powers Boothe, Meg Foster, Charley Boorman, Dira Pass.
A look at our own culture through the eyes of the aboriginal tribes of the Amazon. (They call us the 'termite people', because of the deforestation and industrial development we have brought to their homeland.) The director's son, Charley, is totally convincing as a young boy raised by aborigines. Great music by Junior Homrich.

THE ENTITY, 1983, C-115m
D: Sidney J. Furie. Barbara Hershey, Ron Silver, Jacqueline Brooks, David Lablosa, George Coe, Margaret Blye.
The truly frightening thing about this movie is that it's based on a true story, about a woman who is repeatedly violently raped by an invisible presence. Initially, she seeks the help of a psychologist, who is a strict behaviorist and thinks that it is all 'in her mind'. It is not until a chance encounter with a team of parapsychologist from the local university that she finally finds people who understand her problem. One of the film's great strengths is its portrayal of the professional rivalry that develops between the psychologist (who has begun taking a personal interest) and the parapsychologists, who are interested in investigating the phenomena. The final scene in the gymnasium is the only part of the film based on speculation only. At last report, the case was still active.

EXCALIBUR, 1981-British, C-140m
D: John Boorman. Nicol Williamson, Nigel Terry, Helen Mirren, Nicholas Clay, Cherie Lunghi, Corin Redgrave, Paul Geoffrey.
A stylish adaptation of Thomas Malory's 'Le Morte D'Arthur'. Boorman knew exactly what he was doing in combining certain key characters and keeping the spirit of the legends. The Grail Quest is especially well handled. Williamson's Merlin and Mirren's Morgana are both brilliant performances. Great music. Try to see this one on the big screen.

HARVEY, 1950, 104m
D: Henry Koster. James Stewart, Josephine Hull, Peggy Dow, Charles Drake, Cecil Kellaway, Victoria Horne, Jesse White, Wallace Ford, Ida Moore.
Imagine a movie that chooses as its main theme a Welsh animal spirit called a pooka (or 'pwcca' in Welsh)! That would be improbable enough by today's standards. But the fact that it happened in a 1940's Pulitzer Prize-winning

play and subsequent movie boggles the mind! The pooka in question is a 6-foot invisible rabbit named Harvey, who manifests himself only to a gentle tippler named Elwood P. Dowd, played to perfection by Stewart. Jesse White (the lonely Maytag repairman) made his film debut here. Few movies are as much fun as this.

THE HAUNTING, 1963, 112m
D: Robert Wise. Julie Harris, Claire Bloom, Richard Johnson, Russ Tamblyn, Lois Maxwell, Fay Compton
Based on Shirley Jackson's masterpiece 'The Haunting of Hill House', this is probably the ultimate ghost movie. A parapsychologist and a team of student assistants investigate a haunted house. Based on the premise that no ghost ever hurts anyone physically; the damage is always done by the victim to himself, psychologically. Julie Harris is marvelous.

INHERIT THE WIND, 1960, 127m
D: Stanley Kramer. Spencer Tracy, Fredric March, Gene Kelly, Florence Eldridge, Dick York, Harry Morgan, Donna Anderson, Elliot Reid, Claude Akins, Noah Beery, Jr., Norman Fell.
This should be required viewing for every Pagan. For many of us, there came a time when our own ideologies simply collided head-on with fundamental Christian faith, and we knew we could no longer accept it. Never has a movie embodied this theme so well. Based on the play by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, it deals with the Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925 in Tennessee, where a high school teacher was arrested for teaching Darwin's Theory of Evolution. The debate that ensued was between two of the most brilliant minds of their day, the great trial lawyer Clarence Darrow for the defense, and two-time Presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan for the prosecution. Kelly's character is based on acid-tongued columnist H. L. Mencken. This is riveting, from first to last.

JONATHAN LIVINGSTON SEAGULL, 1973, C-120m
D: Hal Bartlett. Many seagulls.
Although the film is flawed and drags a little toward the end, it is nevertheless well worth seeing. The photography is beautiful, and Neil Diamond's score (including 'Skybird') is marvelous. It is, of course, based on Richard Bach's marvelous tale of a little seagull that refuses to fit in with his flock, preferring to follow a higher, more mystical, calling. This is yet another one you should try to see on the big screen.

LADYHAWKE, 1985, C-124m
D: Richard Donner. Matthew Broderick, Rutger Hauer, Michelle Pfeiffer, Leo McKern, John Wood, Ken Hutchison, Alfred Molina.
Whoever decided on the music for this film should be shot! Think what a nice soundtrack by Clannad would have been like. That reservation aside, this is a great medieval fantasy concerning two lovers who have been separated by a curse, and a young thief who becomes their ally, an unusual but charming role for Matthew Broderick. (If anyone ever gets around to filming Katherine Kurtz's 'Deryni' books, this is the team that ought to do it.)

THE LAST UNICORN, 1982, C-84m
D: Rankin & Bass. Voices of Mia Farrow, Alan Arkin, Jeff Bridges, Tammy Grimes, Robert Klein, Angela Lansbury, Christopher Lee.
Based on the incomparable fantasy novel by Peter S. Beagle, this is very adult animation. And because Beagle himself wrote the screenplay, this film contains spiritual one-liners that hit you right in the gut. Example: 'Never run from anything immortal. It attracts their attention.' Though this is NOT classic Disney animation (in fact, it looks like limited animation), the voice-work, screenplay, and art stylings are all so good, you're inclined to overlook it. Angela Lansbury's character voice for Mommy Fortuna is marvelous. And there's a lovely lyrical score by the group America.

THE LAST WAVE, 1977-Australian, C-106m
D: Peter Weir. Richard Chamberlain, Olivia Hamnett, (David) Gulpilil, Frederick Parslow, Vivean Gray, Nanjiwarra Amagula.

Chamberlain plays an Australian lawyer defending an aborigine accused of a murder that was actually done by magic. This is a rare and wonderful glimpse into the tribal religion of the native Australians, their myths, and their belief in the Dream Time. Peter Weir (famed for 'Picnic at Hanging Rock') directs this atmospheric thriller.

LEGEND, 1985-British, C-89m
D: Ridley Scott. Tom Cruise, Mia Sara, Tim Curry, David Bennent, Alice Playten, Billy Barty.
One of the most visually luscious films ever created. Every frame is gorgeous. The plot is nearly archetypal, with evil (Curry) attempting to seduce innocence (Sara). Though it's hard to accept Cruise as the hero of this Grimm's-like fairy tale, Curry and Sara turn in good performances. The European version runs 20 minutes longer and retains the original (and, in my opinion, superior) musical score by Jerry Goldsmith. The American score is by Tangerine Dream.

THE LORD OF THE RINGS, 1978, C-133m
D: Ralph Bakshi. Voices of Christopher Guard, William Squire, John Hurt, Michael Sholes, Dominic Guard.
This ambitious but flawed animated feature covers half of J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy trilogy, ending much too abruptly. But for all the criticism usually heaped upon this film, there ARE moments of absolute genius. Such as the Dark Riders attempting to kill Frodo and friends in their beds at the Prancing Pony Inn. Or Gandalf and Frodo's moonlit walk through the Shire. Or the first time Frodo puts on the ring. These moments alone make the movie well worth seeing.

NEVER CRY WOLF, 1983, C-105m
D: Carroll Ballard. Charles Martin Smith, Brian Dennehy, Zachary Ittimangnaq, Samson Jorah.
A brilliant performance by Smith (based on author Farley Mowat) as a young man sent to study wolves in the Arctic. Again, we are treated to the insights of the native culture (the Innuit), and are shown how it has been debased through contact with our own greedy culture. This film contains some of the most spectacular nature photography ever put on film. Ballard was chief nature photographer for Disney Studios for years. Try to see this one on the big screen.

NOSFERATU THE VAMPYRE, 1979-West German, C-107m
D: Werner Herzog. Klaus Kinski, Isabelle Adjani, Bruno Ganz, Roland Topor.
For vampire lovers, this film is the creme de la creme. Werner Herzog is a leader of modern German Expressionist cinema, and here he is operating at the top of his form. The spooky atmosphere is so thick you could peel it off the screen in layers. (Try to see this one in the theater.) The creepiness of Kinski's Dracula is equaled only by the classic beauty of Adjani's Lucy. This is the perfect film for Halloween night. The German language version with English subtitles is far superior to the English version, and slightly longer. (The SOUND of the German dialogue actually fits the mood of the film better.)

ON A CLEAR DAY YOU CAN SEE FOREVER, 1970, C-129m
D: Vincente Minnelli. Barbra Streisand, Yves Montand, Bob Newhart, Larry Blyden, Simon Oakland, Jack Nicholson. Alan Lerner & Burton Lane score.
Probably inspired by the case of Bridey Murphy, this musical is all about hypnosis, past life regression, ESP, reincarnation, and other 'New Age' topics (though 20 years too early). (One wonders how Shirley MacLaine missed starring in this. Yet, one is thankful for small favors.) Streisand is wonderful, especially in the lavish flashback sequences. Montand should have been replaced. Still, the plot's surprising turns are well within the realm of supernatural possibility.

THE SERPENT AND THE RAINBOW, 1988, C-98m
D: Wes Craven. Bill Pullman, Cathy Tyson, Zakes Mokae, Paul Winfield, Brent Jennings, Theresa Merritt, Michael Gough.
Directed by Wes Craven (famed for his 'Nightmare on Elm Street' series), this is the true story of Wade Davis, an ethnobotanist who is sent to Haiti to bring back the secret of the so-called Zombie drug, tetrodotoxin. But the local practitioners of 'Voodoo' don't yield their secrets too easily and, before it's all over, Davis finds himself a victim of the drug -- which gives Craven carte blanche for the wonderful special effects he's famous for. Like 'The Believers', this

film unfortunately shows the native religion (Voudoun) primarily in a negative light. Still, at times it manages to capture its beauty, mystery and innocence, especially in the festival scenes when the entire village spends the night asleep in a candle-lighted forest.

7 FACES OF DR. LAO, 1964, C-100m
D: George Pal. Tony Randall, Barbara Eden, Arthur O'Connell, John Ericson, Kevin Tate, Argentina Brunetti, Noah Beery, Jr., Minerva Urecal, John Qualen, Lee Patrick, Royal Dano.
For people who think that decent fantasy films are a recent development, this movie is going to come as a delightful surprise. The special effects and gentle magic of director George Pal was the perfect means of bringing the Charles Finney classic 'The Circus of Dr. Lao' to the screen. Randall, in a tour de force performance of six roles, is the mysterious Chinese guru, Dr. Lao, whose travelling circus changes the course of history for a small Western town. For the better. A lovely and funny film with a spiritual dimension that would appeal to every Pagan. Nice musical score by Leigh Harline combines Western and Oriental music.

SILENT RUNNING, 1971, C-89m
D: Douglas Trumbull. Bruce Dern, Cliff Potts, Ron Rifkin, Jesse Vint.
Should be subtitled 'Druids in Spaaaaace!!!' Aboard the deep space ship Valley Forge, the very talented Bruce Dern (in his most likable film role ever) battles to save the last vestiges of the Earth's forests. Special effects by the team that created '2001'. And a brilliant musical score by Peter Schickele (whose better-known comic persona is P.D.Q. Bach), sung by Joan Baez.

SLEEPING BEAUTY, 1959, C-75m
D: Clyde Geronimi. Voices of Mary Costa, Bill Shirley, Elinor Audley, Verna Felton, Barbara Jo Allen, Barbara Luddy.
The all-time masterpiece of the animator's art, this is the most lavish and most expensive (by contemporary standards) animated feature ever done by Disney studios. The uninitiated may babble about 'Fantasia', but the true cognoscente of animation know that THIS is the apogee of the art form. From the lush color stylings (heavy use of greens and purples), to the elegantly stylized backgrounds, to the figure of Maleficent (designed by Marc Davis), to a fire-breathing dragon that wasn't equaled until 'Dragonslayer', this film is superb. Voice work by Audley and Felton is outstanding. The film should also serve as a textbook example of how to adapt a classical score (Tchaikovsky's 'Sleeping Beauty Ballet') to a movie soundtrack. Never has it been done better. See it. One last consideration: this was filmed in the extra-wide-screen Technerama process, and naturally loses a lot when transferred to video. Try to see this in a theater. One with a BIG screen and a state-of-the-art sound system. You will be amazed.

SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES, 1983, C-94m
D: Jack Clayton. Jason Robards, Jonathan Pryce, Diane Ladd, Pam Grier, Royal Dano, Shawn Carson, Vidal Peterson, Mary Grace Canfield, James Stacy, narrated by Arthur Hill.
Ray Bradbury's fantasy novel is brought to the screen by a director who understands it. This is a mood piece, and it's done to perfection. It all takes place in that strange twilight halfway between children's make-believe and the world of the supernatural. You're never quite sure which it is. Jonathan Pryce is utterly mesmerizing as the sinister Mr. Dark, leader of a mysterious travelling carnival. He has so much screen presence you can barely take your eyes off him. I haven't seen an actor in such total control of a role since Gene Wilder did 'Willy Wonka'. An added bonus is that Bradbury himself wrote the screenplay, and it shows. It's a real cut above the insipid screenplays we're all used to.

STAR WARS, 1977, C-121m
D: George Lucas. Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Peter Cushing, Alec Guinness, Anthony Daniels, Kenny Baker, voice of James Earl Jones (as Darth Vader)
Despite the spaceships and high-tech doodads, this is really more fantasy than science fiction. And the reliance which director George Lucas placed in the theories of Joseph Campbell help shape a story that is very near to myth. The other two movies in the trilogy, 'The Empire Strikes Back' and 'Return of the Jedi' are also important. The main interest to most Pagans lies in the mystical sub-motif of 'the Force', a kind a 'mana' that is ethically neutral, but may

be used in magic for either good (as evidenced by Obi Wan Kenobe) or evil (as evidenced by Darth Vader). In the second film, it is the great Jedi Master, Yoda (created by Muppet masters, Jim Henson and Frank Oz), who teaches us most about the Force. This is pure magic.

THE WATCHER IN THE WOODS, 1980, C-84
D: John Hough. Bette Davis, Carroll Baker, David McCallum, Lynn-Holly Johnson, Kyle Richards, Ian Bannen, Richard Pasco.
What I wouldn't give to have seen this as a teenager! Johnson stars as a girl whose family has just rented an old English country house, where she is haunted by the image of a young girl who disappeared years ago. During a strange seance-type initiation ritual. In the ruins of an old chapel. During a freak lightning storm. During an eclipse. The subtext is so thick you could cut it with a knife. Even though such elements remain unstated, for those of us interested in power points, ley lines, and astronomical alignments, this movie is a real treat. Someone Knew Something! Sadly, the end is badly flawed. But no matter, because the fun is in the getting there. A delightful cast, and great atmosphere throughout, make this film special.

THE WICKER MAN, 1973-British, C-95m
D: Robin Hardy. Edward Woodward, Christopher Lee, Britt Ekland, Diane Cilento, Ingrid Pitt, Lindsay Kemp.
Based on the Anthony Shaffer thriller, this movie is a favorite of most Pagans. The plot concerns a police sergeant (Woodward) sent to investigate the disappearance of a young girl, on a small island off the coast of Scotland. There he finds a completely Pagan society. Local color and beautiful folk music enhance the most loving portrayal of a Pagan society ever committed to film. Unfortunately, in the end, the Pagans are 'revealed' to be the requisite bad guys. If you can overlook the ending, however, this is fine movie. Every Pagan I know who's seen it wants to move to Summer Isle immediately.

WILLOW, 1988, C-125m
D: Ron Howard. Val Kilmer, Joanne Whalley, Warwick Davis, Jean Marsh, Patricia Hayes, Billy Barty, Pat Roach, Gavan O'Herlihy.
Despite the story by George Lucas, this is NOT the 'Star Wars' of the fantasy genre. Too derivative (especially Mad Martigan, who is a Han Solo clone). Still, the film has a lot to say about magic, and Davis gives a delightful performance. Jean Marsh is terrific as the evil Queen Bavmorda (in a role that almost parallels her role as Queen Mombi in 'Return to Oz'). And the scene in which Chirlindrea appears to Willow in the forest is as close to an epiphany of the Goddess as I've ever seen on film. That scene alone is worth the admission price.

WINDWALKER, 1980, C-108m
D: Keith Merrill. Trevor Howard, Nick Ramus, James Remar, Serene Hedin, Dusty Iron Wing McCrea.
This is the best cowboy-and-Indian movie I've ever seen. Mainly because there are no cowboys in it. It is pure Native American. Trevor Howard is incredible as the old Indian chief who returns from the dead in order to protect his family, and restore to it a lost son, a twin who was stolen at birth by an enemy tribe. This film FEELS more like genuine Native American than any other I can think of. The Utah mountain scenery is breath-taking. Costuming (mostly furs) is authentic. And dialogue is actually in the Cheyenne and Crow languages, with English subtitles. And there's enough mysticism (especially in the old Indian's relationship with his horse) to please any Pagan audience.

WIZARDS, 1977, C-80m
D: Ralph Bakshi. Voices of Bob Holt, Jesse Wells, Richard Romanus, David Proval, Mark Hamill.
Post-holocaust scenario with the forces of evil technology led by the wizard Blackwolf arrayed against the forces of benevolent magic led by the wizard Avatar. With background stylings a la Roger Dean, and character design that borrows from Vaughn Bode, this is tongue-in-cheek wizardry at its finest. The character of Elinor, a faery nymph, is a complete success -- a milestone in adult animation. Great voice work and nice music. And who is that wonderful (uncredited) narrator???

XANADU, 1980, C-88m
D: Robert Greenwald. Olivia Newton-John, Michael Beck, Gene Kelly, James Sloyan, Dimitra Arliss, Katie Hanley. Yeah, yeah, I know. On one level, it's just Olivia Newton-John on roller-skates. But on another level, it is the story of how one of the nine muses of classical mythology (Terpsichore) comes down from Olympus to inspire a young artist. On yet a third level, it is the biggest Hollywood musical produced since the golden years of MGM. And it works well on all counts. The brilliant musical score (including several chart-toppers) is provided by the Electric Light Orchestra's Jeff Lynne, and Olivia does them up proper. Gene Kelly might not dance as well as he once did, but he can still charm as well. And did anyone notice that's Sandahl Bergman leading the muses in dance? As if that weren't enough, the film includes a delightful animated segment that marked the debut for Don Bluth studios, which later gave us 'The Secret of NIHM' and 'An American Tail'.

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